

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A meatal occluder for closing a lachrymal meatus of a human eye, comprising:

a substantially cylindrical body (10); and

at least one fin (13) adapted to take up a folded position, wherein the fin (13) is substantially folded into a reduced diameter portion (10') of the cylindrical body (10), and an extended position wherein the fin (13) projects from the cylindrical body (10)[[,]]

wherein said fin (13) ~~being~~ comprises a heat-deformable material and is constructed and arranged so that the fin ~~from~~ takes said folded position when the occluder is at room temperature, and exposure of the fin to a heating effect of a human body causes the fin to move with respect to the cylindrical body to said extended position; and

wherein the fin comprises a free end, said free end being substantially housed into a reduced diameter portion of the cylindrical body, when the fin is in said folded position.

2. (original) Meatal occluder according to claim 1, characterized in that it is made from a heat-expandable material.

3. (previously presented) Meatal occluder according to claim 1, characterized in that it is made from polymers chosen from a group comprising polymers, homopolymers, cross-linked polymers, silicones, acrylic polymers, polyurethanes, hydrocarbonated polymers and a combination of the above polymers.

4. (original) Meatal occluder according to claim 2, characterized in that the heat-expandable material has a vitreous transition temperature from -10°C to 30°C .

5. (previously presented) Meatal occluder according to claim 1 characterized in that said fin (13) pivots between said folded position and said extended position about an axis perpendicular to a longitudinal plane of said meatal occluder.

6. (original) Meatal occluder according to claim 5, characterized in that said fin (13) when in said folded position extends in a direction substantially parallel to the longitudinal direction (X) of the cylindrical body (10).

7. (previously presented) Meatal occluder according to claim 5, characterized in that said fin (13) is situated in the vicinity of one end (10b) of said cylindrical body (10), a free end (13a) of said fin (13), when in the folded position,

extending in the direction of the opposite end (10a) of said cylindrical body (10).

8. (previously presented) Meatal occluder according to claim 1 characterized in that said fin (13) pivots between said folded position and said extended position about an axis parallel to the longitudinal direction (X) of the cylindrical body (10).

9. (previously presented) Meatal occluder according to claim 1, characterized in that said fin (13) is situated in the vicinity of a tapered end (10b) of said cylindrical body (10), the opposite end (10a) of said cylindrical body (10) comprising a flange (11).

10. (previously presented) Meatal occluder according to claim 1, characterized in that it comprises a plurality of fins (13) regularly distributed on the cylindrical body (10) of said occluder.

11. (currently amended) A meatal occluder for closing a lachrymal meatus of a human eye, comprising:

a substantially cylindrical body having a longitudinal axis; and

at least one fin comprising a heat-deformable material, the at least one fin having a first position in which the at

least one fin extends from the cylindrical body substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis;

wherein the cylindrical body and the at least one fin are constructed and arranged so that the at least one fin extends in the first position when the occluder is at room temperature, and wherein exposure of the heat-deformable material to a heating effect of a human body causes the at least one fin to move from the first position of being arranged substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis to a second position in which the at least one fin extends outward from the longitudinal axis;

wherein when the at least one fin is in the first position, an exterior of the fin is arranged so as to preserve the cylindrical shape of the cylindrical body; and

wherein the fin comprises a free end, said free end being substantially housed into a reduced diameter portion of the cylindrical body, when the fin is in said ~~folded~~ first position.

12. (previously presented) The meatal occluder according to claim 11, wherein the heat-deformable material is a heat-expandable material.

13. (previously presented) The meatal occluder according to claim 11, wherein the heat-deformable material is a polymer chosen from a group consisting of: polymers, homopolymers, cross-linked polymers, silicones, acrylic polymers,

polyurethanes, hydrocarbonated polymers and a combination of the above polymers.

14. (previously presented) The meatal occluder according to claim 12, wherein the heat-expandable material has a vitreous transition temperature from -10°C to 30°C.

15. (previously presented) The meatal occluder according to claim 11, wherein the at least one fin is constructed so that when moving from the position of being arranged substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis to a position of projecting outward from the longitudinal axis caused by exposure of the heat-deformable material to a heating effect of a human body, the at least one fin pivots between said respective positions about an axis perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

16. (previously presented) The meatal occluder according to claim 15, wherein the at least one fin is situated in a vicinity of one end of said cylindrical body, a free end of said fin, when in the position of being substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis, extending in a direction of an opposite end of said cylindrical body.

17. (previously presented) The meatal occluder according to claim 11 characterized in that said fin pivots between said respective positions about an axis parallel to the longitudinal axis of the cylindrical body.

18. (previously presented) The meatal occluder according to claim 11, wherein the fin is situated in a vicinity of a tapered end of said cylindrical body, an opposite end of said cylindrical body comprising a flange.

19. (previously presented) The meatal occluder according to claim 11, wherein the at least one fin comprises a plurality of said fins regularly distributed on the cylindrical body of said occluder.

20. (previously presented) The meatal occluder of claim 1, wherein when the fin is in the folded position the fin is substantially folded into a reduced diameter portion of the cylindrical body so as to preserve the cylindrical shape of the cylindrical body.

21. (new) The meatal occluder of claim 1, wherein the heat-deformable material of the fin is characterized so that fin assumes the folded position when the occluder is at a temperature below 37°C.

22. (new) The meatal occluder of claim 11, wherein the heat-deformable material of the fin is characterized so that fin assumes the first position when the occluder is at a temperature below 37°C.